

Amendments to the Atomic Energy Act, 1962 will have to be considered at the appropriate time.

(b) Developed countries like Japan and South Korea are pursuing a large nuclear power programme. In USA and Western Europe, however, its growth has slowed down mainly due to saturation in demand for energy and energy conservation measures. Nuclear power capacity in the world is growing particularly in the countries of the Asian Region.

(c) The cost of generation of electricity from nuclear power plants in India is comparable to the cost of generation from coal-thermal stations located at about 1000-1200 Km. from coal pit-heads. The cost of generation from nuclear plants is expected to be increasingly competitive with that from thermal plants over the plant life time due to substantially lower fuelling costs. The cost of hydel generation is lower than nuclear and thermal generation.

(d) Foreign investment in nuclear power sector may facilitate introduction of new technologies other than PHWR technology and allow the possibility of overseas funding in this area.

Expandable Housing Scheme

1772.DR. ARVIND SHARMA : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether DDA has invited applications for allotment of houses under "Expandable Housing Scheme, 1996; and

(b) if so, when the draw for allotment of these houses are likely to take place ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (DR. U. VENKATESWARLU) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Delhi Development Authority has reported that draw of lots for allotment of houses under Expandable Housing Scheme, 1996, is expected to take place in March, 1997.

[Translation]

Nuclear Power Programme

1773.SHRI JAYSINH CHAUHAN : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have chalked out any new nuclear power programme to increase the established capacity of nuclear power in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which its implementation is likely to be completed ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI YOGINDER K. ALAGH) : (a) to (c) The proposals for Ninth Five Year Plan 1997-2002, envisage commencement of construction of two units of 500 MWe of Tarapur-3 & 4, two units of 220 MWe of Kaiga-3&4 besides the Kudankulam (2 X 1000 MWe) project in technical cooperation with Russian Federation. Towards the end of the Ninth Plan period preliminary work on one 500 MWe Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor (PFBR) is also proposed to be commenced. 300 MWe capacity of Rajasthan Atomic Power Station (RAPS-1&2) presently under capital maintenance is expected to be brought back into operation during 1997-98. 880 MWe of new generating capacity consisting of two units each of 220 MWe at Kaiga in Karnataka and Rewatbhata in Rajasthan, are expected to be commissioned during 1998-99.

[English]

Price of Cooking Gas

1774.SHRI SHANTILAL PARSOTAMDAS PATEL :
SHRI DINSHA PATEL :

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the price of cooking gas for commercial use has been fixed by the Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government have received representations from the commercial users all over the country for review of its decision; and

(d) if so, whether the Government are considering to lower the prices following resentment for the commercial users of cooking gas ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI T.R. BAALU) : (a) to (c) The price of cooking gas (LPG) for commercial use is fixed on import parity basis. The recent increase in the price of LPG for commercial use is due to hardening of the prices of LPG in the international market.

(d) There is no proposal under consideration.

Power Plant

1775.SHRI N.K. PREMCHANDRAN : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the proposal for setting up a 500 MW Power Plant by the Cochin Refineries has been pending

with the Government for Approval;

- (b) whether any clearance has been granted;
- (c) if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) if not, the reason for the delay ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI T.R. BAALU) : (a) to (d) Government has on 28.2.97 accorded 1st Stage clearance to Cochin Refineries Limited, for preparation of a Detailed Feasibility Report, at an estimated cost of Rs. 2.50 crores, including FE component of Rs. 1.75 crores, for setting up of a 500 MW Power Generation Plant at Ambalamugal, Ernakulam District, Kerala.

Pilferage in Oil Refinery

1776. SHRI VIJAY HARISHCHANDRA PATEL : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government is aware about pilferage of huge quantity of oil from Barauni Oil Refinery at various stages;

(b) if so, the amount of loss Government is incurring; and

(c) whether the Government propose to take immediate steps to check the pilferage ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI T.R. BAALU) : (a) to (c) According to I.O.C. there is no pilferage of oil from Barauni Refinery. IOC have an effective system of checks and balances coupled with close monitoring of loading and despatch of all petroleum products from the refinery premises.

Besides, a full compliment of CISF personnel are deployed in the refinery premises for security including prevention of pilferage.

Exploration of Deposits of Uranium

1777. SHRI SOUMYA RANJAN : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) the States in which scientists had recently explored the deposits of Uranium;

(b) the locations where work of exploration of Uranium has since been started;

(c) the total quantity of Uranium extracted therefrom so far;

(d) whether the Government propose to explore the deposits of Uranium by using more modernised equipment; and

(e) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI YOGINDER K. ALAGH) : (a) and (b) Preliminary survey for locating uranium reserves has been carried out throughout the country. The States and the locations where promising indications of uranium reserves have been noticed recently are :

1. Meghalaya – Near Domiasiat in the West Khasi Hills District.
2. Andhra Pradesh – Some areas in Nalgonda, Guntur, Cuddapah & Chittoor Districts.
3. Uttar Pradesh – Naktu-Kudar in Sonbhadra District.
4. Gujarat – Garumal in Panchmahals District.
5. Rajasthan – Putholi in Chittorgarh District
6. Karnataka – Gopi in Gulbarga District.

(c) Uranium has not yet been extracted from any of these areas.

(d) and (e) The Atomic Minerals Division (AMD) of the Department of Atomic Energy already employs modern multidisciplinary techniques like remote sensing using satellite data, study of aerial photographs, airborne gamma-ray and magnetic surveys etc. for uranium exploration. The Ninth Five Year Plan of AMD envisages modernisation through better equipment such as cesium vapour magnetometer for collection of airborne magnetic data, transient electro-magnetometer for ground surveys, global positioning system etc. for improving efficiency.

Display of Portrait

1778. SHRI PARASRAM BHARDWAJ :
SHRI CHHITUBHAI GAMIT :

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) the criteria laid down for selecting the portraits of patriots to be displayed in the Courts throughout the country as well as in the buildings of National importance;

(b) whether it comes under the jurisdiction of Chief Justice, States or Centre, to take final decision in this regard; and

(c) if so, the procedure followed in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (DR. U. VENKATESWARLU) : (a) to (c) The